2009/2012 U.S. Supported Summit Initiatives

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Summit of the Americas

Since President Clinton convened the first Summit of the Americas in 1994, the Summits have been the premier venue for heads of state in the Western Hemisphere to discuss common policy issues, affirm shared values, and commit to collaborative action with public and private partners to address challenges in the Americas. During the Fifth and Sixth Summits in 2009 and 2012, the Obama Administration and its regional partners launched initiatives focused on expanding economic opportunity, improving social equity, promoting clean energy, and increasing citizen security.

Economic Opportunity

Expanding economic opportunity for all citizens addresses the underlying causes of instability and builds a solid foundation of sustainable democracy and prosperity for all. U.S.-led 2009 and 2012 Summit initiatives support inclusive economic growth, entrepreneurship, and increased business linkages. These initiatives include:

- ***Small Business Network of the Americas*** (SBNA): Supports small and medium- sized enterprises (SMEs) as engines of inclusive economic growth and job creation. The SBNA fosters an interconnected network of about 2,300 small business support centers in the Western Hemisphere assisting more than two million small business owners.
- ***Women's Entrepreneurship in the Americas*** (WEAmericas): A public-private partnership to promote inclusive economic growth by reducing barriers women entrepreneurs face in starting and expanding SMEs: access to markets, capital, building skills and capacity, and women's leadership opportunities.
- ***Innovation Fund for the Americas*** (IFA): Supports entrepreneurship and competitiveness by investing in cost-effective break-through solutions to environmental vulnerability, citizen insecurity, at-risk youth, poor quality education, weak governance, uncompetitive SMEs, and Haiti's reconstruction.
- ***Broadband Partnership of the Americas***: Promotes universal access to communications and broadband technologies as a tool for competitiveness, development, and economic prosperity.
- ***CEO Summit of the Americas***: A high-level dialogue among business and government leaders that took place for the first time at the Sixth Summit. The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) is exploring ways to continue and deepen this dialogue and foster public-private partnerships in the region.
- ***Microfinance Growth Fund***: Supports access to finance to more than 100,000 micro and small enterprises.

Clean Energy

Energy security and climate change are urgent global challenges. Promoting clean energy, low-carbon development, and climate-resilient growth are among the U.S. government's highest priorities and receive support from the following Summit initiatives:

- ***Energy and Climate Partnership of the Americas*** (ECPA): A forum and framework to address regional challenges on shared goals of clean energy development, energy security, and climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- ***Connecting the Americas 2022*** (Connect2022): An initiative co-launched by Colombia and the United States under ECPA to provide universal access to reliable, clean, and affordable electricity for citizens of the Americas through enhanced electrical inter-connection and greater private investment in the power sector.

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Social Equity

Social development is a key aspect of the United States' comprehensive approach to partnerships that increase democratic stability, improve citizen security, and sustain economic growth in the Western Hemisphere. U.S. support focuses on promoting social justice and improving access to services for vulnerable and historically marginalized groups, including indigenous peoples; people of African descent; lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons (LGBT); and women and girls.

- ***Inter-American Social Protection Network*** (IASPN): Facilitates cooperation among governments, non-governmental organizations, international organizations, and experts from across the region to share best practices on implementing innovative anti-poverty programs.
- ***Education Partnership for At-Risk Youth***: Leverages public-private partnerships that promote education, training, and employment opportunities for out-of school, unemployed, and at-risk youth.
- ***Scholarships for Education and Economic Development*** (SEED): Provides technical and professional development scholarships to disadvantaged groups to study in the United States.
- ***100,000 Strong in the Americas***: A goal to increase the number of educational exchanges between the United States and Latin America and the Caribbean to 100,000 annually in both directions to foster business ties, strengthen bilateral relations, and prepare students for the 21st century global workforce.

Citizen Security

The United States' citizen security strategy emphasizes an integrated and multilateral partnership to strengthen rule of law institutions and address the root causes of crime and violence. Much of the region enjoys greater peace and prosperity, but crime, violence, and corruption pose direct threats to the Hemisphere's citizens. To improve citizen security, President Obama launched the following initiatives to build on strong partnerships developed through the ***Merida Initiative*** and the ***Colombia Strategic Development Initiative*** (CSDI):

- ***Caribbean Basin Security Initiative*** (CBSI): A partnership among the United States, CARICOM members, and the Dominican Republic to substantially reduce illicit firearms trafficking, increase public safety and security, and promote social justice.
- ***Central America Regional Security Initiative*** (CARSI): A whole-of-government citizen security initiative that complements host nation efforts to reduce rising levels of crime and violence, strengthen justice sector instructions, and support crime prevention programs.

Our cooperative approach is based on shared responsibility to address threats to the safety of our citizens in the hemisphere and acknowledges the critical importance of political will, rule of law, and effective institutions of governance, as well as common aspirations for secure, prosperous, and inclusive societies.

Commitment to Work as Equal Partners

The impact of Summit partnerships is evident throughout the Hemisphere in improved primary and secondary education, opportunities for higher education, regional security, economic opportunities, and stronger commitment to democracy, public health, and human rights. The United States is committed to working as equal partners and is catalyzing connections in the region to work to benefit the people of the Americas.

For more information on Summit of the Americas initiatives, visit: http://www.state.gov/p/wha/rt/soa/